GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4785
ANSWERED ON:22.12.2014
ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE FOR MINING
Subbareddy Shri Yerram Venkata

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is true that mining industry in the country is on the verge of closure because of onerous forest clearance requirement imposed by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether mine owners association has requested the Government to extend the deadline for getting forest clearance;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to protect the mining industry in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINES AND STEEL (SHRI VISHNU DEO SAI)

(a) and (b): The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India grants prior approval for diversion of forest land located within the mining lease area under the provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 (FC Act). MoEFCC, vide letter No. 11-362/2012-FC dated 01.02.2013, informed the States / Union Territories (UTs) that:

(i) In case of mining leases having forest land in part or in full, approval under the FC Act for diversion of entire forest land located within the mining shall be obtained before execution/ renewal of the lease under the Mines and Mineral (Development & Regulation) Act 1957. Applications seeking prior approval under FC Act for diversion of the entire forest land (and not a portion thereof) located within the area proposed to be assigned on lease shall only be accepted by the Nodal Officers in the concerned State/ UT Governments.

(ii) All State/ UT Governments shall within a period of three months submit to the MoEFCC details of all such mines whether approval under the FC Act for diversion of only a part of forest land has either been obtained or is presently under examination in the State/ Central Government. The State Governments in all such cases shall request the concerned user agencies to submit application to obtain approval under the FC Act for diversion of the remaining forest land located within the mining lease. Mining in such leases after two years will be allowed only if the user agency either obtains approval under the FC Act for the entire forest land located within the mining lease or surrenders such forest land for which approval under FC Act has not been obtained and execute a revised mining lease for the reduced lease area.

(c) to (e): Representations have been received by the MoEFCC from Federation of Indian Mineral Industries, Confederation of Indian Industries and some of the mine owners to extend the deadline for getting forest clearance which are being examined in consultation with the Ministry of Law and Justice.